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REMARKS

Applicants hereby respond to the Office Action dated August 30, 2004 within the shortened three month statutory period for response. Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, Applicants amend claim 1 and add new dependent claims 16-17, so claims 1-17 are now pending in the application. Support for the various amendments may be found in the originally filed specification, claims, and figures. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Miller (U.S. Patent Application Publication US 2002/0002496). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Miller is limited to a host computer retrieving previously stored information from a local database or a user retrieving product data from a plurality of providers by a hyperlink. The retrieving step as disclosed by Miller is as follows:

"Upon receipt of the bar code or bar code representation, the system retrieves one or more pieces of information concerning a product, a document, or other item (e.g., an identification tag, a part or piece of equipment, a coupon, a license, a form, a manual or book, etc.) that corresponds to or is associated with the bar code." (Paragraph 45)

It is clear that Miller discloses a retrieving step as is commonly found in computer implementations where information is routinely retrieved from a local database. According to Miller, for example, a user may be interested in purchasing a new ink cartridge for his inkjet printer. The user may use a barcode scanning device to scan a bar-coded label on an expended inkjet cartridge. The barcode information is then transmitted from the user's computer to a server that then uses the barcode information to search an internal database (a database that is part of the system) for a match. If a match is found, a variety of information regarding one or more merchants may be retrieved from the database and presented to the user within a portal page. Thus, the retrieving step as disclosed by Miller occurs at the front-end. In other words, information is previously loaded into a database to be made available such that the information can be subsequently retrieved based on a barcode scan. The retrieving step of Miller occurs on the front-end which is further demonstrated by FIG. 2 of Miller. (See block 214, "retrieve information relating to scanned bar code").

Miller discloses a means for populating a database with product information including corresponding bar codes. Starting with paragraph 0095, Miller discloses a means for a manufacturer, vender or producer (providers) to connect to a server where they may register a bar code and "transmit whatever information the entity wishes to provide the system" which, may

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include a portal page component and advertisements. The provider connects to the system and provides any information that they would like to appear when a user scans a barcode matching the bar-code that the entity registered. (See FIG. 3A). Therefore, according to Miller, a user may obtain product information from a variety of vendors only after the vendors have initiated the steps as described in paragraphs 0095 to 0097 and illustrated by FIG. 3A. Therefore, the providers must take proactive steps, including the supplying of product data, in order to become active participants in the system of Miller.

Miller also discloses that hyperlinks may be stored in a database and presented to users along with other information. This would enable a user to select the hyperlink to display the corresponding webpage within the portal page. While the step of the user selecting a hyperlink results in the retrieval of a webpage, the retrieval originates from user's computer, and is transmitted to the user's computer, rather than a host computer retrieving the webpage. In other words, Miller does not disclose a host computer extracting or retrieving information from any number of websites to present to a user searching for specific products. Rather, Miller requires the user to link to a website or entities to take proactive steps in order for the system to obtain product data. As such, Miller does not disclose or suggest "retrieving, by a host computer, product data from a plurality of websites associated with a plurality of at least one of affiliated and non-affiliated providers, wherein said product data is to be provided to a user" (emphasis added) as recited by amended independent claim 1.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the statement that Miller does not disclose a process for "determining how data retrieved from a website may be integrated with existing data in a database" and the Examiner's suggestion to include such elements in the claims. Applicant amends claim 1 to include "parsing said product data according to data types to determine, via said host computer, a first portion of said new product data associated with at least one of said data types which may be added to stored product data based on at least one of said data types" to further clarify that the data retrieved is integrated based on data types. As set forth in claim 17, data types refers to the classification of data elements such as, for example, product descriptions, price, merchant information, manufacturer information, images, etc. Miller does not disclose a parsing or determination process according to data types.

The Examiner also asserts that Miller discloses "a system or method wherein an identity of a product is captured in operation upon selecting a button." While it is true that most e-commerce

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web sites employ mechanisms to allow a user to select a product for purchase where some type of identifier is maintained in memory, Miller does not disclose or suggest determining that certain data elements do not fit within a data type criteria and placing such data into a buffer. For example, selecting one or more products for purchase on an e-commerce site does not trigger a process for filtering out irrelevant data based on data types. The mechanism for storing product selection is only concerned with predefined data elements, such as a SKU or other product identifier. Miller does not disclose or suggest employing logic for determining whether or not a data selection matches a data type criteria. As such, Miller does not disclose or suggest "parsing said product data according to data types to determine, by said host computer, that a second portion of said product data may not be entered with said stored product data within said database; and adding said second portion to a buffer" as recited by dependent claim 16.

The Examiner also rejects claims 2-15 which variously depend from independent claim 1. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. Applicants assert that dependent claims 2-15 are differentiated from the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as set forth above for differentiating independent claim 1 from the prior art.

Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. No new matter is added in this Response. Reconsideration of the application is thus requested. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-2814. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed. Applicant invites the Office to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response or the present application in general.

Respectfully submitted,

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